



# THE LEAF

**THE LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB**

**Established 1943**

**March 2023**

## **President's Message - Lorraine Robson**

What a difference a week can make! While my garden still has big patches of snow in the shade, the snowdrops and crocuses (though very late) are blooming at last. Soon it will be time to stake my peonies so their pretty petal-packed flowerheads won't topple over in the rain that inevitably falls when they are in full bloom in early June. I like to stake them before they grow too tall so they can grow up through the stakes and criss-crossed strings naturally rather than looking strangled as they do if I get to this task too late in the spring.

All loving mothers hand out safety tips and cautions when they see their offspring playing with potentially dangerous objects, so my Mom often cautioned us when we picked up sharp, pointy sticks like garden stakes. It's no wonder that I still hear her voice saying, "Be careful you don't poke your eye out with that." I must confess I've had a few near misses while bending over my flowerbeds at dusk to pull a weed or tuck up a stray tendril of a flowering vine. Even in broad daylight, if my hair falls forward, it can obscure my vision enough to make those sharp points invisible.

We kids used to tease my Mom for all her safety warnings, but the risk is real. A friend from another garden club told me about the husband of a friend of hers in England who had bent over his flowers and ran his face into a stake which poked through his eye into his brain and killed him. Gruesome! I know a couple of Rosarians who refer to gardening as a "blood sport", but I don't think that's what they have in mind. (If a rose thorn pricks your skin, it can transmit a nasty fungal disease called *sporotrichosis*, but that's another story.)

So now I put champagne corks on the tops of my stakes. It's easy to cut a small hole in the bottom of the cork with a narrow screwdriver or a wine opener corkscrew. If your taste runs to red or white wine, your corks will already have a hole started. Just press the stake into the cork in a direction away from your face. Corks hold up well to the elements and are a sustainable solution. I must add, however, that "Don't drink and garden" is just as important advice as "Don't drink and drive."

Even though I was completely sober, a couple of my worst injuries in recent years have happened in the garden. Heading carefully down the back stairs to take some photos of the snowdrops one January, my feet slipped out from under me and I shot down the stairs on my back like an Olympic luge athlete, grabbed for the railing, and tore my rotator cuff. Luckily, I didn't hit my head or break my spine (or my camera), but I banged up my ribs pretty badly. I managed to stand and call for Jay to help me, but I could barely walk. An



LVGC MEETINGS  
3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) currently at

**Mount Seymour United Church**

**1200 Parkgate Ave,  
North Vancouver,  
BC V7H 2X9  
(604) 929-1336**

*Meetings start promptly at 7:15 PM*

### **SPEAKER - MARCH 16**

GARY LEWIS, FROM PHOENIX PERENNIALS  
**"THE COMPLETE TALK ON GROUND COVERS"**

If you need to contact anyone at LVGC please use email or phone! If you must send a thing - phone to get the address and send it to a VIP (list is on the next page)

**PLEASE USE ELECTRONIC ACCESS**  
Your emails are welcome!

## Executive 2023

### President

Lorraine Robson x

### Vice President

Judith Brook x

### Secretary

Sarah-Jane Gray x

### Treasurer

Jennifer Sydenham x

### Membership

Ann McKinnon x

Alison Parkinson x

### Members at Large (MAL)

Linda Downs x

Jacquie D'Auria x

Marilyn Bullock x

Brenda Reid x

## Committees

### Plant Table

Cathy Rickey x

### Hospitality

Sharon Carabetta x

Susan Nicholls x

Daphne Page x

Miriam Scott x

Leneen Webb x

### Sunshine / Door Prizes

Rosamond Hughes x

### Website

Aline Burlone x

### Newsletter Editors

Maria Issa x

Margaret Campbell x

### Executive Meetings

April Executive meeting will be  
chez Marilyn Bullock



Newsletter items to  
[lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com) APRIL 8 2023

### Thanks to this month's LEAF

**contributors:** Rosemarie Adams,  
Aline Burlone, Sharon Carabetta,  
Kitty Castle, Rita Marshall,  
Lorraine Robson, Jennifer  
Sydenham

ambulance took me to the hospital on a stretcher for x-rays and the attendants gave me nitrous oxide (laughing gas). Lovely stuff! It took the pain away instantly but doesn't last long. I was sorry when the attendants left with their tank, but I got to visit with some lovely young physiotherapists for months afterwards.

Another time I was sweeping up the patio prior to hosting a retirement garden party for a friend when I caught my heel on a low stone wall and tumbled over backwards into a raised but also tore my rotator cuff. If I'd fallen in the other direction, I might have landed head-first into the pond. Now when I go out in the garden, I think of those signs on our local mountain roads which ask: "If you get lost today, will anyone know?" The idea is that you should always tell "a responsible person" when and where you're going for a hike and when to expect you back; given my experiences, I think I should start doing that when I head out into the garden. Honestly, I've fallen in the garden more often than while skiing over the past five years and most winters I ski three or four times a week!

Hazards abound in the garden: slipping, tripping, falling from ladders, mishaps with sharp secateurs or - heaven forbid! - power tools! But, of course, great joy is also to be found in the garden: the colours, the perfume, the sweet satisfaction of seeing that bud swell and open to reveal a perfect bloom. Brian Minter did a great job of selling us on the satisfactions of gardening at last month's meeting and I expect Gary Lewis will be equally convincing at our next meeting in his talk on Ground Covers.

Thank you to Linda Schell for so kindly offering to let us hold our seed-starting workshop in her double carport on March 12 and to Jennie Nicholls and Samantha Carey for volunteering to lead the workshop. Talk about gardening satisfaction! What could be more satisfying than planting a seed and watching it germinate, unfurl its first leaves, and continue to grow till it flowers and fruits? Thank you, too, to the gardeners who came out to learn more about seed starting. We wish you all the best of luck in growing your seedlings on to Plant Sale size. Your contributions of seedlings and divisions are what make our sale such a success every year and help pay for the speakers that we all enjoy.

Please see other messages in *The Leaf* about the **Plant Sale**. Our MALs have been busy planning. We'll have sign-up sheets available at our March meeting for volunteers who wish to help with the May 12 set up and pricing or to take a shift at the giant May 13 sale. As the snow melts and you explore your garden again, consider what you might divide and pot up for the Plant Sale.

When I was heading out on trips and adventures, my Mom always said, "Be careful" and my Dad always said "Have fun!" Especially in combination, it's good advice. My wish for all of you this gardening year is, "Be careful out there, and have fun!"



*"The gardening season officially begins January 1 and ends on December 31."* - Marie Huston

AND

*"The best way to get real enjoyment out of the garden is to put on a wide straw hat, hold a little trowel in one hand and a cool drink in the other, and tell the man where to dig."* -- Charles Barr



## SPEAKER

### GARY LEWIS from PHOENIX PERENNIALS

**The Complete Talk on Ground Covers: Plants that reduce maintenance, control erosion, improve the environment, and beautify the landscape**

*Note that Gary will be bringing copies of his book for sale and signing. Come prepared to do some shopping! Payment by cash is preferred.*

Gary Lewis has had a lifelong passion for plants. While completing a Masters of Science degree in Botany, Gary became the owner of Phoenix Perennials on his 28th birthday. Since that time, he has greatly expanded the business into a dynamic, award-winning, destination nursery for Western Canada with over 5000 different plants a year, many of which are grown at Phoenix Perennials from plant material sourced from around the world. In 2013 Phoenix Perennials launched Canadian mail order to bring their unique plant selection to a broader audience and now ships more than 2500 different plants a year to avid gardeners from coast to coast to coast. is a regular speaker at garden clubs and has appeared many times on radio and television. He has written for a variety of gardening magazines including Fine Gardening and in fall 2022 his encyclopedia, *The Complete Book of Ground Covers*, was published by Timber Press. This compendium focuses on 4000 different ground covers for the temperate gardening world accompanied by 650 photos he took on travels around the world.

In 2013 Gary was selected as Communicator of the Year by the BC Landscape and Nursery Association and in 2017 was the recipient of the Retail Sales Award from the Perennial Plant Association. Gary has lead botanical and garden tours to Holland and Belgium, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, and Western Australia with future trips planned for France plus returns to New Zealand and South Africa.



### *Vice President – Judith Brook*

This is the much-anticipated list of booked speakers:

April 20 Willoughby Arevalo: Gardening with Mushrooms

May 18 Tasha Murray: Invasive Plants and Other Pests That Are

Relevant to Gardening

June 15 Ana Dushyna: All Season Herbal (Apothecary) Garden

•

The Brian Minter event was a huge success: the total number of tickets was 158, with 111 free members' tickets and 47 sold to the public at \$15.

### *Treasurer – Jennifer Sydenham*

Bank Balance as of February 28	\$16,860.93
In Petty Cash	\$100.00
Total	\$16,960.93



### *Website – Aline Burlone*

Brian Minter's "2023 Plant Picks" and "National Garden Bureau Plants of the Year 2023" are now posted on the website under Guest speakers → Past Speakers 2023 → Minter, Brian and can be downloaded directly from that page. The direct link is <https://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/guest-speakers/past-speakers-2021/>

**PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR DONATION OF A NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEM THAT WILL GO TO THE HARVEST PROJECT. THEY APPRECIATE IT SOOOO MUCH.**

## Membership – Ann McKinnon & Alison Parkinson

Last month we announced that membership was full and this month the news is that we already have eight people on the 2024 waitlist. If you know of someone who is thinking of joining, please urge them to contact Membership at [lvgc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:lvgc.membership@gmail.com) to avoid waiting until 2025!!!

On the last few pages of this *Leaf*, you will find the 2023 membership list. This year it lists your email address as well as your telephone number, unless you asked us not to include this or you did not specify what you preferred. Please take a minute to check your information and let us know if there are any errors by emailing Membership. We've made every effort to ensure accuracy, but producing the list is a manual process so may not be perfect. As a former MAL, I know how important it is to have this information correct when organizing the plant sale and dealing with any last-minute changes on the day of the event. Also, if your contact information changes during the year, do let us know. Please remember that this list should only be used for garden club purposes and not shared outside the membership.

## MALS – Marilyn Bullock, Jacquie D'Auria, Linda Downs, Brenda Reid

**The PLANT SALE is less than 2 months away and we need your help!** 3 of our site hosts from last year have graciously agreed to host again this year, but we are looking for one more site. We also need volunteers to price and sell all those plants. And, it will soon be time to **pot your plants** so soil, pots and labels are on their way. Here are the details:

### HOST SITE NEEDED

**We need one more plant sale site** in the Lynn Valley area for Friday May 12 through Saturday May 13. If you have a house with parking available out front, a reasonable sized driveway/front yard/backyard, *etc.*, where we can display the plants, and a carport or covered area for the cashier's space, we would love to hear from you! If you would like to host the plant sale, please contact Brenda Reid.

### PLANT SALE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need lots of volunteers to make this year's plant sale a success! Your help is needed at our sites to price, sell and move the plants throughout the Mother's Day weekend. Here's when we need you:

#### FRIDAY MAY 12<sup>th</sup> - 1PM TO 4PM (3-hour shift) - PRICING

- Sort, move, arrange and organize the plants at one of the sale sites.
- Price the plants (with the help of our "plant experts")

#### SATURDAY MAY 13<sup>th</sup> - 10AM to 4PM (2-hour shifts) - SELLING

- Assist customers with their plant questions (and if you're not an expert, help them Google!).
- Handle the cash.
- Manage the crowds and keep the lineup to pay orderly.
- Put plants on hold while people shop.
- Help customers haul their plants to their cars.
- Help move any leftover plants.

If you want to be part of the fun, please contact Marilyn Bullock. Marilyn will also have sign-up sheets available at the LVGC meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

### SOIL, POTS & LABELS

Due to our recent cold, snowy weather, we've decided to delay ordering the potting soil until the end of March. We will send out an email once we finalize the date and the location of the soil delivery. Have your own soil container and a shovel ready – we are aiming for March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Pots & plant labelling sticks will also be provided at the soil site so you can pot up those plants for the plant sale!

If you've been collecting beer flats, Costco boxes, or anything else that is good for carrying plants, you can drop them off at the time of the plant drop off (Friday May 12<sup>th</sup>) or bring them to our LVGC meeting in April (leave them at the entrance & the MALS will happily collect them).

*"Plants are like people; they're all different and a little bit strange"* -John Kehoe

*"I always think of my sins when I weed. They grow apace in the same way and are harder still to get rid of."* -Helena Rutherford Ely



## Sunshine – Rosamond Hughes

No, it's not about the joy of seeing a rhododendron shedding its weight of snow – it's about welcoming new members of LVGC, and giving a reminder to the rest of us of the work of the "Sunshine" committee: the committee sends out cards to members recuperating from illness and also to members and their families who have suffered a loss.

The committee appreciates your help by letting us know where some 'sunshine' would be welcome...



## Calling All Veggie, Herb and Fruit Growers

- Jackie Morris

The **Plant Sale** location for sales of veg, herb and fruit plants and bushes will be at Kathy Stubbs' garden, as was last year. We had two tables laden with plants, with more underneath and in the back and to the sides! I hope many of the club will be seeding *and/or* growing *and/or* potting up varieties of these items, which are big and fast sellers.

At this time, please contact me if you are planning/hoping to contribute some of these plants. That is all I need to know for now. I expect to, but haven't yet planted one single seed at the time of writing this message. Best to email me. Thanks and happy growing.

## Sunset Butterflyway

- Kitty Castle



Here is an update on the **Sunset Butterflyway**, started back in 2019, which is adjacent to 4181 Sunset Blvd. We benefited from a generous \$300 grant from LVGC in 2022 which was earmarked for the mural. The mural has taken longer than planned. Originally this was going to be on 3 plywood panels with the design painted on in the traditional way. Then we investigated the cost of plywood and paints compared to using Aluminum Composite Panels (ACP). We decided on using

ACP as the design is digitally printed directly on the panel, and is it is much lighter than plywood. We have just collected the three printed panels, each 4ft x 8ft, which are now in our basement. They are ready to go up on the fence opposite the Butterflyway plantings, when the weather improves. We hope to have a celebration in April and will let the club members know when.

There is a team of 6 of us who maintain the Butterflyway, and we had an early planning meeting last month. We will be working there at least once a month from late March



Woodland Skipper on Douglas aster

to October, with most of our efforts concentrated in the early part of the year. We put down a good amount of leaves as mulch in November. 2022 was a challenge because of the wet spring and then that very hot dry summer, followed by a wait



Lorquin's Admiral on Camellia



Lorquin's Admiral on Buddleia

for the delayed fall of leaves for mulching. The swath of goldenrod is tough and had no problem and is such good value. We tried the Chelsea chop\*\* in late May on some of the taller perennials, like the showy milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), asters (*Asterales spp*) and goldenrod (*Solidago*), to minimize staking later. We had some good results. Our sunflowers did not thrive, so if any member has sunflower advice, please contact me (kcastle@hotmail.ca). Butterfly visitors including Woodland Skippers on the Douglas asters (*Symphytotrichum subspicatum*) and the pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*) and several visits from Western Tiger Swallowtails and Lorquin's Admirals on the buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*) and nearby evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*).

This season we are going to put in a few new native plants such as spring gold (*Lomatium utriculatum*) and try growing the orange western honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*) up a tall limbed fir tree. We would like to promote plantings in our neighbourhood that would benefit not only butterflies but other insect pollinators, like bees, moths, beetles, as well as birds like the hummingbird. I heard an interesting talk by Dr. Elle, Professor of Biological Sciences at SFU. Her research was focused on protecting pollinators and enhancing pollination, and which species of bees are attracted to which plants. Here is a link to one of her publications:

[https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/people/eelle/elle\\_bee\\_info/Bees\\_and\\_Gardens.pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/people/eelle/elle_bee_info/Bees_and_Gardens.pdf)

Bring on the sunshine, the spring flowers and the pollinators!

\*\* Chelsea chop - for those of us who went "Huh? Whazzat?" - *vide infra!*

## Butterflies and Their Host Plants

- sent in by Jennifer Sydenham

This [excellent!!] website provides a list of plants that attract butterflies, and you can **search by plant or by butterfly**. I believe the most endangered butterfly is the Monarch in Western Canada and there are only two plants that it likes - both varieties of milkweed. It takes a while to load, so be patient. See also "March links". [Butterflies/Hosts](#)

## The Chelsea Chop

For this I "went to the source": none other than the [Royal Horticultural Society](#). You will have to read the whole article yourself as I try not to infringe copyright... but here is enough to whet your appetite and mine.

"The Chelsea chop (so called because it is usually carried out at the end of May, coinciding with the RHS Chelsea Flower Show) is a pruning method by which you limit the size and control the flowering season of many herbaceous plants.

Some herbaceous perennials can be cut down by as much as half with positive results:

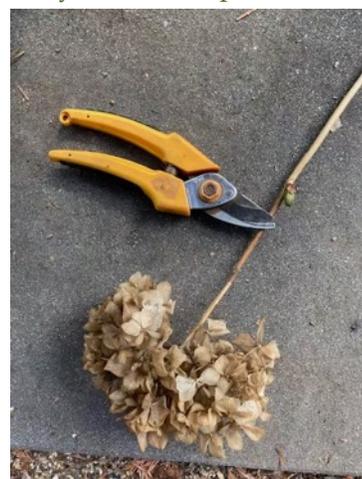
The plants are not so tall and leggy

They need less staking

The flowers are smaller but more numerous

This happens because the removal of the top shoots enables the side shoots to branch out (the top shoots would normally inhibit the sides hoots by producing hormones in a process called *apical dominance*, the process by which the topmost (apical) bud on a shoot suppresses the growth of buds lower down. It can be suppressed by removing the shoot tip (and apical bud) by pinching out or pruning, which allows the lower buds to sprout, creating bushier, branched growth. Using this method, along with regular feeding and watering, ensures beds and borders look tidy throughout summer.

The article goes on to list the types of plants suitable for The Chop, as well as detailed timing, methods *etc.*



## Deadheading and Pruning Hydrangeas

- Rosemarie Adams

If you didn't deadhead your hydrangeas when they finished blooming and dried off last year, *now is the time to do it!* Cut the end of the dead flower/branch about an inch **above** the highest bud, which will become this year's flower. If you cut it off any lower, you will likely not get any blooms this year.

Trim off any broken, straggly or deceased branches, and you can also thin out "crowded" growth.

## No-Till, No-Dig Gardening [YAY!!!]

- sent in by Lorraine Robson

During the questions after Brian Minter's talk, someone asked about tilling the soil to work compost into the soil. More and more soil scientists are saying not to dig up your soil, but just add the compost, Sea Soil, or leaves to the surface and let it break down naturally with the worms doing the work of pulling it into the soil for you.

Here's a short article about an English gardener who has been running a comparison of side-by-side tilled and untilled beds for 15 years. His "no-dig" beds produce a 20% higher yield than the bed he works so hard on digging every year! When we dig, we disrupt the fine network of mycorrhizae that transfer water and nutrients to our plants' roots. Less work, but better results: I'm in!

["No-Dig" Garden Bed Produces 20% More Veggies than Tilled Bed Next to It \(returntonow.net\)](http://returntonow.net)

## Sow Cover Crop to Protect and Amend Your Soil (part 1)

- by Judith Brook

For those who attended our Club's February 2023 general meeting and heard Brian Minter's talk, you may have noticed his mention of growing clover and cover crops. I've been growing cover crops for decades, sowing in Fall and digging into the soil in Spring. Google tells us this practice "provides many benefits including reducing erosion, improving soil, competing with weeds, enhancing nutrient and moisture availability and helping control pests". You want to avoid leaving bare areas over the winter, as the pounding rain (and snow!) compacts the soil. Cover crop roots help create space underground that allows the soil to better absorb and store water.

The two broad categories of cover crops are nitrogen-fixers (eg clovers) and soil-builders (eg buckwheat, oats, fall rye). For years, I grew rye which is excellent at keeping the ground aerated with its roots, but takes longest of the crops to decompose on digging in. More recently, I've used mixed legumes, and also oats on their own, which worked well.

This past fall I used barley (also fixes nitrogen, which constantly leaches out of our soil with rainfall), and



buckwheat (which winter kills - so does not actually provide the soil the protection I'm looking for through the winter), and hairy vetch (my current favourite, lives through the winter and packs in the nitrogen!) One year an un-planned experiment clearly demonstrated its usefulness - comparison of locations where hairy vetch grew and where it was not sown, showed a startling difference in size and health of the later plants in those locations.

I've also grown clovers - they transfer atmospheric nitrogen into their plant roots. My initial impetus for growing these clovers (Crimson Clover, Medium Red Clover, Alsike Clover, Klondike Ladino Clover) was to feed bees and pollinators, but in addition the soil really benefits.

The *West Coast Seeds* catalog does an excellent job at extolling the virtues of cover crops. I highly encourage you to use cover crops - some advice suggests sowing whenever you have some bare soil. You can sow in between late maturing veg crops in late summer as you want the cover crop to germinate and begin growth before the weather turns chilly. No need to wait for the fall either!

## Sow Cover Crop to Protect and Amend Your Soil (part 2)>>>>>

Judith writes: "Normally I trim my cover crop before digging it in. This year I'm having some help - he ate quite a bit today! (Presumably, he reciprocated with fertilizer - ed)



### The Wonder of Spring

"All through the long winter, I dream of my garden. On the first day of spring, I dig my fingers deep into the soft earth. I can feel its energy, and my spirits soar." - Helen Hayes

"Spring unlocks the flowers to pain the laughing soil." - Reginald Heber

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt" - Margaret Atwood

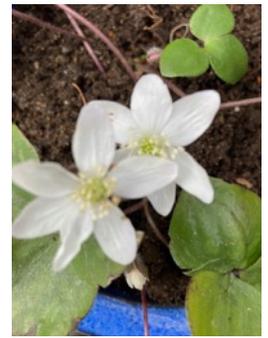


## Bright Spot – Rosemarie Adams



*Hepatica nobilis* "White Form"

This little plant was under more than 18 inches of snow a week ago. The snow finally cleared yesterday, and I found this in bloom. Other pink, blue and mauve pots of *Hepatica* have no flowers at present, a couple showing buds, but most are just emerging.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER GOINGS-ON

### POTS, POTS, POTS!!!!

Sue Nicholls has lots of them and will bring them to the March meeting as she will be away for April and the Plant Sale [Sue, how could you??]. While she is willing to take them home after the meeting, she may dump the lot at Maria's – who has already cornered the market for small pots. [Do they breed in that dark shed?] As Maria will also be away for the April meeting, you are asked to please go help yourself in her garden shed and take what pots you need/want. Enter at your own risk, as things are piled high. The house-sitters promise not to call the cops on you.

### DIG, DIG, DIG!!!

One of LVGC's own, Gillian Cramer, has offered us a lot of her garden's contents – as she is doing a major re-org.

"The Dig" will have to be the weekend of **March 18<sup>th</sup>** as Gillian is also off to parts unknown. [...actually Devon and Cornwall gardens – but I didn't want to make you too jealous.] As usual, we should probably start **around 10 AM**, and keep going until we drop – or get hungry. Luckily there are a lot of good foodie places around as Gillian's house is the lovely blue craftsman, by the flashing stop light on the SW corner of Mountain highway and Argyle Road – a couple of houses from the school. Wear warm clothes and boots – and I hope you have a snow-less spot to put your 'finds' when you get home. I don't. Still 4-6 inches of the nasty white stuff up here.

... and by the way, we are not alone!! Judith Brook sent me [this](#) – and it makes my heart sing! "Developer donates two houses instead of demolishing as land is prepared for condo project." It goes on to say, "[Developer] has also given the plants, shrubs, trees and landscaping materials to neighbours and the First Nation to keep them out of the landfill."

### RIDES, RIDES, RIDES!!

If you are looking for a ride to the garden club meetings or have space to include another member, please email Kitty While it looks like Kitty will coordinate – [Thanks Kitty!!!!] there have been a number of members who have offered rides/carpooling to fellow members. Willing drivers please contact Kitty!



### BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS!!!

The following titles will be added to the Lynn Valley Library and LVGC will be credited with a donation label inside the front cover so that patrons will be aware of your generous gift.

*Drip irrigation for every landscape and all climates* – Robert Kouric

*Futureproof your garden: Environmentally sustainable ways to grow more with less* – Angus Stewart

*Gardener's palette: Creating colour harmony in the garden* – Jo Thompson

*Gardening without irrigation; or without much, anyway* – Steve Solomon

*Low water landscaping for dummies.* – Teri Dunn Chace

*Pacific Northwest native plant primer: 225 plants for an earth-friendly garden* – Kristin Currin

*Resilient garden: sustainable gardening for a changing climate* – Tom Massey

*Water-wise gardening: How to grow food with or without irrigation* – Steve Solomon

## **LEARN, LEARN, LEARN (On-line)**

**- sent in by Rita Marshall**

...and other good stuff is to be found in the [Edible Garden Project's latest newsletter](#). Have a look! If you want to sign up for the newsletter, [use this link](#). And here is another one: "Understanding Your Soil with Arzeena Hamir" – at the West Van Library. If you want to watch her presentation, here is the video link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbsN7nutBw4>

The Maplewood Flats newsletter also has lots of useful information. Read it [here](#). Basically "no soil, no birds" ... it's worth thinking about especially in built-up urban areas... [*why, why, why do they do that? - ed*]

**- from Lorraine Robson**

Master Gardener Kevin Kelly is teaching another **\$5 Zoom course on April 1**. We don't need to be available at the time of the talk. As long as we register, we'll receive a link to the recording which we can watch any time. [Home Gardening Series: Creating Healthy Garden Soil \(psu.edu\)](#)

**UBC BOTANICAL GARDENS - March in the Garden | [Horticulture Training Program Application](#) Deadline March 15**

## **HELP, HELP, HELP!**

### **The North Shore Hospice Garden Welcomes Volunteers**

The North Shore Hospice, located at 319 E 14th St in North Vancouver near Lions Gate Hospital, is a fully landscaped property with a lovely enclosed private garden that provides tranquility and respite for patients, their families, friends and caregivers. Master Gardeners have been involved with tending the garden since 2012 and hold gardening sessions twice each month from March through October. Garden activities include caring for plants, pruning shrubs, planting perennials, bulbs and seasonal colour, weeding, and generally keeping the garden looking its best.

This is not exclusively a Master Gardener endeavour! We welcome anyone who loves gardening (and has a few basic gardening tools) to join us. There is no fixed commitment; join as few or as many gardening days as you like. Or help out occasionally when the hospice is hosting one of its garden events such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt (Easter weekend) or the Arts in the Garden Tour (May 26, 27) when extra hands would really make the garden shine.

For more information about volunteering with us, contact Terry Dixon at [theresadixon2895@gmail.com](mailto:theresadixon2895@gmail.com)



## **One More Spot to See Cornish Gardens**

**- Gillian Cramer**

*Gillian writes, "As you know, I'm going on a garden tour to Devon and Cornwall in May. There is one space left for the tour. Do you know of anyone who would like to go? **Julia Guest** of the Travel Group at 1095 West Pender, Suite 1020 is arranging the tour. The phone number is 604-681-6345 and her email is [juliag@travelg.com](mailto:juliag@travelg.com)*

*The tour starts on May 17th although most of us are arriving at Heathrow the day before. We visit many gardens in Devon and Cornwall including The Lost Gardens of Heligan, RHS Rosemoor, as well as two National Trust properties. The tour ends on May 25th but there is the option of going to London for 2 nights and to see the Chelsea Flower Show."*

## **BC Council of Garden Clubs**

The [newsletter](#) is out, and the spring AGM info states: Registration Form for [Spring AGM April 2023](#) Date: **Saturday, April 1, 2023 10:00 am to 3:00 pm** Place: Bonsor Recreation Complex, 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby Buffet Lunch It would

be appreciated of each club would donate one item for the draw. Thank you! Please register EARLY by mail before March 15, 2023 (Space will be limited) Registration in advanced is \$40.00 per person including lunch and refreshments Late Registration - \$45.00 payment at the door will be accepted.

## Vancouver Master Gardeners' Spring Event

Seven local experts will share their knowledge on What's New in the Gardening world. After 3 years, we are back in-person! It's a great opportunity to see old friends and make new ones. Local gardening companies will be on site to display and sell their new product offerings. Lots of great ideas of your garden!

### Details

Sunday March 26th, 2023 9am to 4pm Michael J  
Fox Theatre, Burnaby  
Tickets \$50 online \$60 at the door  
To register click here - salad & sandwich options  
available to order up to March 12th

### Here is our line-up:

Climate-Ready Plants and People: Approaches from  
UBC Botanical Garden - Dr. Tara Moreau  
Feeding the Soil—Nature's Health Plan for Your  
Garden (and You) - Anne Biklé  
The Complete Talk on Ground Covers - Gary Lewis  
Gardening for Bees: An Ecosystem Approach - Tiia  
Haapalainen  
Growing Up: Vertical Gardening Techniques and  
Tips - Dr. Yael Stav  
Plant Wise: State of Invasive Species in the  
Horticulture Industry - Diane Watson & Allison  
McCabe

## THE COMPOST BIN

- Maria Issa

True confessions: gardening books give me major angst. As I scrolled down the list of Library's recent acquisitions, I became more and more uneasy. "Why?" you might well ask. Because I know that even if I read the books about soil, landscaping, harmonizing flower colours (! I mean, seriously?), I will never do it, and will feel guilty as a result. I admire the patience and eloquence of the writers, their dedication to their craft, their diligence in laying out, in meticulous detail for us idiots, how to do it and get it right. Their results are beautiful, manicured, elegant pieces of art. It's just that I don't have the patience to follow their instructions. Never have. [At this point, I suppose I should admit that my cooking is like my gardening.]

You will never catch me stretching string or using templates to get the perfect veggie layout... or adding the precise layers to make the perfect compost, *etc.* My gardening style is distinctly haphazard. Q1 - "Where can I squeeze this recently rescued plant?" Q2 - "What is wrong with it?" Q3 - "Maybe if I cut it back...?" are my *modus operandi*.

What I can, and do do, is leave well enough alone. I may tie up the occasional gangly plant, or pull the overwhelming weeds, and remove (the big bits of) the constant tree-debris, God-given mulch. I may even top dress everything with whatever soil-amendment (OK: pig poo - *btw* are we getting any this year?) that comes to hand. But basically, I let it all be. If it's dead, I cut it down into small bits and leave it as mulch.... unless it's obviously infested with something vile - then I donate it to DNV's green bin rather than my gently heating pile.

It has occurred to me that I may have over-embraced an article that Aline sent in some years ago - which said "be a lazy gardener" - and promoted leaving plants to over-winter so the bugs can have a cozy home. It sort of suited my style - but I have extrapolated it and adapted that concept to all four seasons. Being a biologist, I'm a strong proponent of "survival of the fittest" - and only the fittest plant can survive my ministrations. It then deserves to live in my garden. That is a successful specimen.

Of course, I do try to help them survive. It would be mean not to. I do water them in summer - and mulch them in the winter and prune them and feed them - but "hardening" rather than cossetting them is really what's needed as the climate changes. I see it as doing them a service: propagating plants that can handle what's coming. The evidence of climate change is actually quite frightening. The floods, the fires, the too much snow and rain, but too little snowpack, do not bode well. I do not want to be planting a garden that becomes a burden, but rather one that is actively adapting in its own way. I don't want to buy new breeds of plants - I want MY plants. Each plant that survives here is a testament to good genetics - and thus its progeny should continue to live. (Please don't misinterpret - I absolutely do buy plants - in fact, I can't resist - I just won't go out of my way for one that's resistant.)

Considering Lorraine's message, I do wonder where the survival of the fittest *gardener* fits into this. I know, that just like me, you have had your share of personal damage, meted out by those garden things that can't get away from us, so they defend themselves in insidious ways: the gash from a rose mega-thorn, the pruned finger instead of rhodo, the eye-missing broken branch, the cranium cracking shed-door, the toe-splintering wheelbarrow or the nose-realigning rake... All in all, I think we're all survivors, and wonders of nature, plants and planters. Still.... be safe out there!

## *Brian Minter's Plant Suggestions*

### **Garden for Wildlife:**

Trees for pollination – Eastern Redbud, Crabapple,  
Southern Magnolia, Black gum, Tuliptree

### **Wildlife habitat:** Microclover

Pollinator Gardens - Diverse plants, year-round food sources

### **Annuals – heat and drought tolerant options:**

Begonia – fibrous begonia" Dragon wings"

Colourful Cannas – 'Cannova'

Coleus – 'Dipped in wine'

Cuphea – 'Vermillionaire'

Ganzanias –

Ipomeas –

Lantanas –

Marigold – 'Endurance'

Salvias – 'Summer Jewel' series, 'Big Blue'

Zinnias – 'Zahara series'

### **Perennials – Heat and Drought Tolerant Options; Pollinator Friendly**

Allium – 'Millennium'

Armeria – 'Dreameria Dream Clouds', 'Dreameria'

Coreopsis – 'Up tick', 'Sylvester'

Echinacea – 'Sombbrero series'

Eupatorium –

Nepeta – 'Cat's Pajamas'

Perovskia – 'Blue Jean Baby'

Sedum – 'Sunsparkle series', 'Prima Angelina'

Chick Charms 'Golden nugget'

### **Shrubs – Heat, Drought Tolerant, Colourful, Wildlife- friendly**

Buddleia – 'Lo nad Behold Pink MicroChip'

Clethra – 'Sugartina Crystelina'

Forsythia – 'Sugar Baby'

Hibiscus – 'Purple pillar'

Hydrangea arborescens – 'Wee White'

Hydrangea paniculata – 'Bobo'

Hydrangea (Mt. Hydrangea) 'Tuff Stuff Ah-Ha'

Rosa Oso – 'Happy Candy Oh!'

Rose: Ping Lim's True Bloom series 'Sincerity'

Syringa – 'Bloomerang Dwarf Purple'

### **Berries**

Ilex – 'Little Goblin Red'

Symphoricarpos – 'Proud Berry'

Callicarpa

Pyracantha

### **Grasses**

Prairie Winds 'Cheyenne Sky'

### **Winter Interest**

Camellia s. – 'Yuletide'

Cornus – 'Arctic sun'

Malus – 'Red jewel'

### **Trees**

Acer griseum 'Copper Rocket'

Nyssa (Tupelo) 'Firestarter'

Parrotia 'Ruby Vase'

Populus (Aspen) 'Mountain Sentinel'

### **Year-round Interest**

Picea abies 'Pusch'

Picea orientalis 'Firefly'

Pinus contorta 'Chief Joseph'

### **Bulbs**

Early risers – snowdrops, daffodils, crocuses

'Peachy Keene' Combinations – pink tulips and orange/white narcissus

Bulbs and perennials together – tulips, narcissus, bleeding hearts, multicoloured hellebores

### **Edible gardening**

Burpee Home Gardens 'Boost Collection'

Mixed herb and vegetable planters

Simply salad blends

Patio cucumbers trained up

Window box beans (Mascotte)

Demon Red peppers

Tomato – 'Mini Siam'

### **Indoor gardening**

Tradescantia of all sorts

Mistletoe Rhipsalis

Tropicals, succulents

Aline has posted the full range of Brian Minter suggestions on the LVGC website – it is many pages. The list above was generated from his presentation in February.